



John Reich Journal

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JRCS

JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY
P.O. Box 135 Harrison, OH 45030

The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States gold and silver coins minted before the introduction of the Seated Liberty design, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

Annual dues \$15.00

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The **John Reich Journal** is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and / or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the editors. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die varieties, die states of published die varieties, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc.

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Cover Photos: 1836 new variety gold half eagle first identified by John W. McCloskey during the summer of 1996. This coin has a new obverse and reverse not previously identified for the series. It also has a date style that is different than any other dies of this year. Photos courtesy of Tom Mulvaney.

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Editors' Comments

1998 . . . Will it prove to be a pivotal year in numismatics? The year has begun with more than its share of promise. The upcoming debut for the state quarters will change our circulating coinage for the first time since the bicentennial. Silver is quickly advancing to the \$7 level giving collectors, and dealers, newfound confidence in a market revival. Where will it take us? We can only sit back and enjoy the possibilities.

The upcoming spring ANA show in Cincinnati will provide us with the setting for a JRCS meeting. Mark your calendars and plan on meeting everyone Friday March 20th at 3:00, check the convention program for room location. We will have educational presentations by Dr. Charles Horning and Brad Karoleff. Charlie's talk will be **Die Variety Diagnostics for R5 Capped Bust Dimes, 1809-1837**. Brad will speak on the literature pertaining to Capped Bust Half Dollars. We will also have time for socializing and discussions concerning our favorite coins. In addition, there will be a hospitality room open Thursday and Friday evenings for JRCS members.

We have again been blessed with wonderful articles for your review. Our authors have continued the tradition of submitting well researched, interesting information for our club publication. The editors would like to encourage everyone reading the journal to submit something for future publication. JRCS is your organization, help to keep it one of the leading specialty clubs.

We would like to again recognize, and thank, Steve Herrman for his continued contributions to the society from the sale of his **Auction & Mail Bid Prices Realized for R4 to R8 Bust Half Dollars 1794-1836 (AMBPR)** listing. The March issue will soon be available from Steve for \$17.50, send your orders to: Steve Herrman, 2817 S. Jay Street, Denver, CO 80227 or you may e-mail him at **herrman102@aol.com**.

Another reminder, you can reach us by E-mail. We will accept letters, articles (Microsoft Word or Text format, please), and questions at **karoleffs4@aol.com**, or **keith.bellman@whittman-hart.com**. Please note that this is a new address for Keith.

Tom Mulvaney also deserves our thanks for many of the photos you see in the **JR Journal**. Tom donates much of what you see for the good of our club and numismatics. If you need illustrations to supplement an article for the journal you can contact Tom at: Tom Mulvaney, P.O. Box 24116, Bluegrass Station, Lexington, KY 40524.

On a sad note, Dr. Ivan Leaman, a pioneer into the research of Capped Bust Half Dollars,

passed away earlier this year. Ivan was a good friend and noted researcher and collector. His help and support will be missed.

The ANA will be having their 1998 ANA Summer Conference at the ANA headquarters in Colorado Springs from July 11th to the 17th. The content will include Flowing Hair Dollars, Draped Bust Dollars, and Bust Half Dollars presented by instructors: Sheridan Downey (Bust Half Dollars, 1794-1836), W. David Perkins (Flowing Hair and Draped Bust Dollars, 1794-1804), and Jules Reiver (Half Dollars and Dollars).

This course will cover collecting, grading, attributing, and researching Bust Half Dollars (1794-1836) and Flowing Hair and Draped Bust Dollars (1794-1804). Great collections and coins will be discussed, including those of Overton, Bolender, and Ostheimer. The manufacturing process of early U.S. coins, die state analysis and current thoughts on rarity ratings, condition census, and market trends will be covered.

The instructors will identify significant reference works in the field and offer suggestions on where to buy and sell early half dollars and dollars. Students will have an opportunity to judge their grading and attribution skills while viewing coins and slides provided by the instructors, and, hopefully, the students.

For more information on this conference, please contact James Taylor, or the ANA Headquarters at 818 North Cascade, Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3279, (719) 632-2646, or by e-mail at anaedu@money.org.

JRCS will be auctioning a complete set of **JR Journals** from Volume 1, Issue 1 (January, 1986) through Volume 10, Issue 3 (December, 1996) including the Index. A set such as this recently sold at a major numismatic literature auction for \$500 plus the fees. This set will be auctioned at the ANA Summer Convention in Portland and we will be accepting mail bids. The proceeds from this auction will benefit the JRCS treasury.

The bidding will start at 10% over the second highest mail bid received. The highest mail bid will be bid by a JRCS officer to ensure the lowest price. You may fax your mail bids to Brad Karoleff at (606) 371-1414 between 1-Jul-98 and 24-Jul-98. On the fax, be sure to include your name, address, telephone number, JRCS membership number (on your mailing label), your bid, and please sign your fax. If a mail bidder wins the set, a \$10 shipping and insurance fee will be added to the total in order to mail them. Bids must be faxed by 24-Jul-98.

Finally, with the recent issue of the index, many members have expressed an interest in custom binding their sets of The John Reich Journal. Those of you interested please contact Brad as soon as possible so we can arrange to get the best price possible on a quantity order.

Bradley S. Karoleff / Keith G. Bellman

Plaudits, Pans and Perplexing Points



I have long enjoyed the silver coins of the U.S. issued before 1838, and

no doubt share with many of you the insufficient funds to buy the best and rarest pieces. I soon became interested in variety collecting, as I could sometimes find unattributed pieces at reasonable prices. Often only scarce or rare varieties are attributed and priced accordingly.

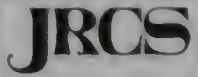


I examined my collecting habits and realized many of the coins I enjoyed the most were attractive low to mid grade pieces (VG to Fine). My current thinking is to get one nicely struck, high grade example (around EF) in a series, and then look for attractive and affordable lower grade examples for the other dates and varieties.

I think part of the attraction to these lower grade pieces is that they served their purpose and passed through many hands and circumstances. I feel the romance and history in them more than in a pristine piece that has never circulated.

In one personal example, I had two 1822 dimes, a nice VG and an average VF. I liked the VG better, so I sold the VF and bought several other coins for my collection. I realize this is poor advice if profit is a major motivation, but for my personal satisfaction, it works well.

Michael Joy



One Year Too Soon . . .

. . . Well, not quite. My 1807 \$5.00 gold piece (Breen #6452) is the earlier type, not the John Reich design. However, I thought some member might have more information about it. The coin is a strong Extra Fine, so wear is not a factor.

The date is obviously doubled. The 1 to the south and is tilted left. It also appears shorter than the primary 1. The 8 is doubled south in the upper loop. The under 0 is shorter and narrower (smaller) than the primary 0. There is no doubling on the 7.

Breen lists both small (Breen #6449, 6450, and 6451) and large (Breen #6452) dates for the coin, but does not mention and doubled dates, nor a large over small date.

I would like to hear from anyone as to whether this is a large over small date, or just a doubled date, and if and where published information exists on the coin.

Darrel Neidigh
620 Bethany Loop
Bethany Beach, DE 19930



Having read the article on blundered edges and how some were reproduced, authored by Russ Logan, I have one to share. I have acquired an 1820 O101 Capped Bust Half Dollar which has a duplicated, inverted edge lettering.

The edge was apparently applied normally, and then the planchet must have been flipped over and then the lettering reapplied.

Perhaps it was accidentally dropped in without checking to see whether or not it had been processed. Or, it may have been dropped back in purposely to produce a novel edge lettering. Not all letters are obviously clear, however, enough of them are visible to see that the lettering is duplicated as well as inverted.

Don Stoebner

(PPP continues on page 38)

Early Silver Dollar Die Marriages Discovered Since the 1881 Haseltine Type Table - A Detailed Analysis

W. David Perkins, NLG

Do you know how many new die marriages of early silver dollars (1794-1803) were discovered in 1997? How many years, prior to 1997, had it been since a new die marriage had been discovered and publicized? How many new die marriages have been discovered since M. H. Bolender's **The United States Early Silver Dollars from 1794 to 1803** was first published in 1950? Since publication in 1881 of the **Haseltine Type Table**? Who discovered these marriages and when? When were they first reported?

Answering these questions is not easy. There is no one reference to turn to that has all the answers. Not all of the answers are straightforward. And not all of the information on these varieties has been published. Furthermore, there have been a number of 'new discoveries' reported or cataloged over the years that turned out not to be new die marriages.



Reverse Die, 1795 B6. "3 leaves under first S of STATES." This is a photo of the Frank Sterling specimen that Bolender 'erroneously' designated as a new variety (B18) in *The Numismatist*, December, 1952, page 1176. Note "3 leaves under first S in STATES."

I imagine even a few early dollar specialists will be surprised at some of the answers! So write down your answers or guesses, and read on . . .

The 'new' Bowers-Borckardt (BB) numbers are courtesy of Mark Borckardt, Bowers & Merena and follow the numbering sequence employed in Q. David Bowers book **Silver Dollars & Trade Dollars of the United States: A Complete Encyclopedia** published in 1993. The 'new' Bolender (B) numbers were assigned by Jules Reiver. These will be included in a revised edition of Bolender's book that is scheduled to be published sometime in 1998.

1795 B18: [Reported Discovery, later discredited and shown to be the same as 1795 B6]

The B18 (Bolender 18) number was first assigned by M. H. Bolender to a 'discovery' he reported in **The Numismatist**, December, 1952, page 1176:

The first discovery of a new major variety of an early silver dollar before 1804 has recently been made, two years after the publication of Bolender's standard reference book on the subject which was published in July, 1950.



Reverse Die, 1795 B6. "4 leaves under first S States": Compare to reverse with "3 leaves under first S in STATES." Which appears to be the earlier die state?

The credit for this new discovery goes to Frank M. Stirling, A.N.A. member 10052, of . . . Baton Rouge, La., and the thrills of his finding, and pride of ownership are making his specialty most interesting. Mr. Stirling is one of the most active collectors in this field.

This 1795 dollar, to be known as Bolender No. 18, was struck from the rare obverse die as used for B.13. The reverse was struck from a newly made die with only three leaves on the wreath below the first S in STATES. Later, a fourth leaf was added to the die and B-5, B-6 and B-12 coins were struck.

This coin will rate rarity 8, as it is the only one known to me up to this time. When the book was published over two years ago, it was hoped that other new varieties would be brought to light. Some minor sub-varieties have appeared and always will, as there are so many different states of the dies, such as die cracks and their degrees of progress, extent of bifurcations, and peculiarities of striking. But a new die, or a new combination of obverse and reverse dies, constitutes a major variety and the constant search for things of this kind in any series keeps collectors forever young.

M. H. BOLENDER, ANA 2776
San Marino, California

Bolender's announcement included a photo of both the obverse and reverse of the Frank Stirling specimen of this reported new variety. Unfortunately, this 'new die combination' turned out to be just a different die state of 1795 B6 (BB-25). For years the three-leaf reverse had been believed to be an earlier die state than the reverse with "4 leaves under the first S in STATES." Theories explaining this unusual occurrence ranged from "fourth leaf was added to the die" to "the die was clogged when 3 leaves specimens were struck, thus fourth leaf did not show." In reality this reverse appears to be a later die state than the "4 leaves reverse!"

The B18 number being assigned and later dropped is the source of much confusion in the rare, high numbered die marriages of 1795 dollars. The next variety discovered became B19, then was later changed to B18, B20 became B19, etc. This will become clear as you read on. [For example, when this 'B18' was later dropped, the Eliasberg 'B19' (see below) became 'B18.' Furthermore, another specimen of this erroneous B18 was offered as part of an extensive variety collection formed by W. Earl Spies and sold by Stack's at public auction in December, 1974 (both obverse and reverse were plated in the catalog). One might think that the 1795 B18 is known by multiple specimens, which today **is not** the case].

1795 B18 (BB-17): [Referred to as B19 by specialists at time of discovery]

This die marriage was discovered by Walter Breen in the Eliasberg Collection and was reported in the July, 1953 **The Numismatist**, page 706. The obverse was that of 1795 B7 married to a new reverse die. This specimen remained in the Eliasberg collection until it was sold in April, 1997. It was formerly in the Clapp and the Earle collections, unattributed in these sales as to the variety. [For more information see *Possibly Unique 1795 B-18 Dollar Variety Soon to be Offered?* in the **John Reich Journal**, Volume 10, Issue 2, April, 1996, pages 34-35].

This specimen was offered by Bowers & Merena in **The Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection Sale**, April, 1997 as lot 2168. It was graded EF-45. Cataloging of this lot was comprehensive and encompassed two full pages. Included were extra large photos of both the obverse and reverse along with a color plate (normal size). Also included was a detailed description of the new reverse die, pedigree and other pertinent information. It realized \$52,800 in very competitive bidding.

Today the Eliasberg specimen, now in the collection of a New Jersey early dollar specialist collector, remains unique. This author knows of no other specimens.



Reverse Die, 1795 B18 (New). The die marriage was formed when the obverse of 1795 B7 was married to this new reverse die. Only 1795 'two leaves' reverse die with 11 berries in the right branch. Photo is the Eliasberg specimen and is courtesy of Bowers & Merena.

1795 B19 (BB-19): [Called B20 when discovered, later changed to B19]

This die marriage was formed when the obverse die of B2 was mated to the reverse die of B7.

Per a letter to Jules Reiver from Frank Stirling, published in **The Lettered Edge** (Newsletter of the Bust Dollar Club, Fall, 1978), March 11, 1978:

The B20 dollar was found in the late Maurice Finman's collection, Pensacola, Fla. in the late 1950s. I have the coin, Earl Spies and Mr. & Mrs. Ostheimer have seen it and OK'd the variety. It has never been published.

Thus this die marriage was known to at least a few specialists prior to 1960. It is unknown if Mr. Stirling ever reported it to Bolender. Stirling may have reported it as it is included in the 1974 **Silver Anniversary Edition of VALUATION LIST FOR The United States Early Silver Dollars from 1794 to 1803** by M. H. Bolender. [*The list had Bolender's name on it, but it was published by Bebee's Inc., Omaha*]. The valuation listing was for "1795 B16 to 20." [For more information on this variety see **John Reich Journal**, Volume 10, Issue 2, pages 16-17.]



Obverse Die, 1795 B19.

Obverse same as B2. Photo may be the Frank Sterling Specimen. Photo was acquired by the author from Armand Champa collection.



Reverse Die, 1795 B19.

Reverse of B7. Note die flaws show below left ribbon. Photo is reverse of what may be the Frank Sterling Specimen of this die marriage.

1795 B20 (BB-16): [Called B21 in the February 12, 1972 Lester Merkin Sale]

This die marriage was cataloged as being identified by Walter Breen. Most likely it was Breen who discovered this new marriage of two known dies. The discovery specimen appeared in the February 12, 1972 Lester Merkin *Public Auction Sale*, lot 299. The catalog description read:

1795 “**B-21**”. New muling of known dies. Obv. B-7, Rev. **B-8**, but finer than the Bolender plate coin of that variety. Immediately identified by straight, die scratch in field, like part of an extra A left of first A in AMERICA, pointing to the nearest berry; recut C in AMERICA. Just about VF, many obv. adjustment marks. Rev. sharper than the obv. and fully VF. The B-8 die was formerly known only by two impressions of that variety; the present muling is superior to either of them and in addition represents a discovery linking the B-8 dies with the remainder of the group (Bolender 16, 10, 17, 1, 2, 7, 19, 18, 12, 5 and 6). Identified by Walter Breen, originally obtained merely as a specimen of the date. Unpublished, to date **unique**. **ILLUST.**

From the plate the coin appears to be at least Very Fine, possibly even Extremely Fine. The B21 (now B20) was purchased by specialist Frank Stirling from this sale for \$900. Frank Stirling graded it VF+.

To the best of my knowledge this specimen remained the only one known for 25 years. **In mid January, 1998** [*shortly after originally mailing this article to be published*] **a second** (known to me) **example of B-20 was reported!** I received a phone call from Mark Borckardt of Bowers & Merena on Tuesday, January 20, 1998 informing me that a dealer had attributed and sent to them a 1795 Flowing Hair dollar (correctly) attributed as B20. A dealer had bought it unattributed, attributed it as B20 (BB-16) and had sent it to B&M to verify attribution. The unfortunate news was that this specimen, although it graded VF or so, is holed. Regardless, it is only the second specimen of the die marriage known. Collectors will soon have a chance to acquire this rare die marriage as it is consigned to the May, 1998 Bowers & Merena auction sale.

1795 B21 (BB-28):

This new die marriage turned up in 1997. I first learned of its existence in April, 1997. I received a phone call that a new die marriage of 1795 dollar had been discovered. It was to be offered in the June 3, 1997 Spink America auction sale of **Important Coins and Banknotes, Including Colonial and United States Coinage and Medals, formerly the stock of Burdette G. Johnson of St. Louis, Missouri.** There was little pre-sale publicity for this important find. The May 27, 1997 issue of **Numismatic News**, page 35 contained in their "Auctions" column the following: "1796 coinage highlights Spink America auction." Under a section labeled "Dollars" this new early dollar marriage was mentioned for the first time publicly: "1795 Two Leaves with reverse die of Bolender-16 and a previously unrecorded obverse die, F to VF, \$10,000-\$15,000." Ads in both **Coin World** (May 19, 1997) and **Numismatic News** (May 20, 1997) mentioned under "Silver Coins Include:" that "Dollars include a new and unrecorded obverse die for a 1795 coupled with a B16 reverse . . ." This specimen was cataloged in the May sale as:

[Lot] 186 - 1795, two leaves (Bolender-obverse die unlisted, reverse die of B-16), *obverse scratches, fine to very fine, of considerable importance to the specialist collector of early silver Dollars*
\$10,000-\$15,000.



The coin was plated, both obverse and reverse, in black and white. The lot realized \$23,100.

Prior to the sale I called to inquire about the lot. I requested a photocopy of the B.G. Johnson (2x2) envelope in which the coin had been stored. This proved extremely interesting. Typed on the front of the envelope was:

Not in Haseltine / Head of
1794 / Very good / excessively
rare / \$60.00 / mxco / BGJ

New Obverse Die, 1795 B21.

B. G. Johnson correctly identified this as a new Bolender variety prior to 1950, however the discovery was kept secret for over 50 years! This specimen was offered publicly for the first time in a June 3, 1997 Spink America Auction Sale. Photo courtesy of Jules Reiver.

Thus this die marriage was discovered and known to B.G. Johnson probably in the middle to late 1930s, and for sure prior to the publication of Bolender's book in 1950!
[The reference "not in Haseltine" refers to the **Haseltine Type Table**, first published in 1881,

which was the standard reference for attributing early dollar varieties prior to Bolender's work]. This coin lay in a bank vault, correctly identified as a new variety, and remained unknown to specialists (for reasons not known) for over 50 years!

1795 B22 (BB-29):

The most recent discovery is yet another new die marriage of 1795 dollar. This marriage turned up in October, 1997 in a group of 20 early dollars sent to ANACS for attribution, grading and encapsulation. The discovery was told on the front page of **Coin World**, November 3, 1997. According to the Paul Gilkes article, "ANACS grader Charles Erb was the first grader to inspect the discovery coin. After examining the coin for several minutes, Erb determined that the coin did not exactly match any of the coins in any of ANACS early dollar references. ANACS senior numismatist Michael Fahey confirmed the coin was an unlisted variety, struck from a known obverse die, but a previously unknown reverse die." The coin was graded "net Fine-12" due to some tooling apparent on the obverse. The coin was shipped to Mark Borckardt at Bowers & Merena for verification. Borckardt assigned the BB-29 number to this new discovery. The number, Bolender-22, was assigned to this marriage by Jules Reiver. The obverse is the same as B12 (BB-26). The new reverse die was described in **Coin World** by Mark Borckardt as:

Three leaves under each wing of eagle. There are six berries in each branch, a feature which is diagnostic among the three leaves type. The left branch has a vertical pair of berries below the left edge of the first S in STATES. There is only one berry on the left branch of the wreath between the eagle's wing and ribbon bow, and it is on the inside of the wreath. The right branch has a berry directly below the center of M in AMERICA, and two berries inside the wreath below the wing.



New Reverse Die, 1795 B22.

The three leaves under each wing and six berries on each branch is diagnostic for this die marriage. Photo courtesy of Jules Reiver.

The coin was photographed both obverse and reverse in **Coin World** on page 1. This specimen quickly found a home in a prominent specialist's collection.

1796 B6 (BB-64):

It is unknown when this die marriage was discovered. Most likely it was in the 1950s, after the publication of Bolender's book. I know of two specimens, both of which can be traced to the middle to late 1950s.

Early dollar specialist K. P. Austin acquired a specimen privately in June, 1957 from Walter Breen. Most likely it was Breen who discovered this new marriage. [*But for some reason Breen did not publish the discovery as he had done in 1953 for the new 1795 B18 variety*]. A. J. Ostheimer, an early dollar specialist with an extensive variety collection, acquired this specimen from Mr. Austin. It was later resold as lot 823 (plated) in Superior's **1975 ANA AUCTION Sale**. This specimen now resides in the Jules Reiver collection. [*Note also that this specimen is the plate coin in the Bowers' silver dollar book*].

A second example of the B6 was in the collection of Emanuel Taylor, another early dollar specialist. [*Author's research*] It is unknown when or where Taylor acquired this coin. The Taylor Collection was acquired by the Kagins in the late 1950s and was offered in a little known catalog titled **America's Outstanding Collection of Silver Dollars For Sale at Fixed Prices**. The catalog was probably issued around 1959. It was not dated. Lot 19 [*unfortunately not plated*] was described as follows:



New Reverse Die, 1796 B6. Note large vertical die break. Break exists on both of the two known specimens. Photo is courtesy of Bowers & Merena.

1796 NEW MAJOR VARIETY, Obverse B-2, Reverse NEW DIE with die break vertically bisecting the right third, very fine except that the right third is virtually Uncirculated with mint luster. A most interesting coin which helps explain why some come in two different degrees of condition. UNIQUE . . . \$1,250.00.

Bolender was aware of this die marriage in 1956 as it was included in his **New 1956 Revised Edition of VALUATION LIST OF The United States Early Silver Dollars from 1794 to 1803**. [*For some reason the 1796 B6 was not included on the 1974 valuation list*]. I also believe Breen was aware of both of these (B6) specimens. According to Art Kagit, Breen worked for the Kagit family around this time. Breen most likely viewed the Taylor-Kagit specimen. For sure he was aware of the fixed price list of the Taylor collection. As far as I have been able to determine, the 1956 Bolender Valuation List is the first mention in print of the 1796 B6. The Kagit FPL is the first time I am aware of a specimen of this die marriage being publicly offered for sale.

This specimen of 1796 B6 was 'hidden away' until it reappeared as lot 1249 in the September 11-13, 1995 Bowers & Merena **The Greenwald and Jackson Collections Sale**. It was plated [*enlarged photo*] for the first time. It sold for \$36,300 with three collectors competing for the lot as it passed \$30,000! The winner was 'Mr. 1796.' The coin has been displayed as part of his **1796 Die Study - Year Set** at the ANA summer conventions recently in Denver (1996) and New York City (1997). It is my belief that this and the Taylor-Kagit specimen are one and the same.

1798 B32 (BB-91):

This new muling of the 1798 B1 obverse and the B4 reverse die was discovered by W. G. 'Farish' Baldenhofer and was reported to readers of **The Numismatist** in a June, 1957 article, on page 651 (with obverse and reverse photos included). Farish Baldenhofer was an early dollar specialist and was quite active in the 1950s. Frank Stirling authored the article at Mr. Baldenhofer's request:

A new major variety of an early silver dollar before 1804 has been discovered. This is the fourth major variety [*the four varieties were not listed - author*] known to have been discovered since the publication of M. H. Bolender's standard reference book on the subject in July, 1950. The credit goes to W. G. Baldenhofer, A.N.A. No. 14664, Springfield, Ohio, one of the foremost collectors in this field.

The new variety was struck from a combination of the obverse die as used for B-1 with the reverse die B-4, a muling heretofore unknown. On this specimen the sixth and seventh stars and the L in LIBERTY are weak due to the damaged condition of the dies at the time of striking. The corresponding portion of the reverse at the letters UN in UNITED is also weak. Short die cracks show on the obverse; one from center of 9 through top part of 8 to bust, another from edge of bust downward to border, and a third from lowest point of thirteenth star downward to border. Part of the lowest curl and most of the second curl from the bottom are missing but this is a characteristic of the B-1 die. The long stems connecting the two lowest berries on the right side of the olive branch probably is the feature that most easily distinguishes the B-4 reverse die from all others. Bolender has examined this dollar and has numbered the variety "B-32." It will rate Rarity 8.

The publication of Mr. Bolender's excellent book on the early dollars, with plates, laid the groundwork for creating great interest in this series. Specialists are now carefully examining these interesting old dollars at every opportunity in hope of finding unpublished varieties, sub-varieties,



Obverse Die, 1798 B32. 13 star obverse die as used on rare 1798 B1. Knob 9 in date. Small Eagle reverse. Note weakness of striking at stars 6 & 7 and L in LIBERTY. Plate is the Baldenhofer 'discovery specimen.'



Reverse Die, 1798 B32. Heraldic Eagle reverse. Note large letters reverse and 5 vertical lines in each shield element. Reverse is later used to strike 1798 B4. Plate is the Baldenhofer specimen.

or one that is excessively rare. It would be most interesting to have all such discoveries recorded in *The Numismatist* as was done in the case of the 1795 B-18, December, 1952, page 1176, and the 1795 B-19, July, 1953, page 706.

The Baldenhofer 'discovery' specimen was later sold privately to dollar specialist A. J. Ostheimer. It was offered as lot 853: "Unlisted and Heretofore Unpublished 1798" in the August, **1975 A.N.A. Auction Sale** catalogue by Superior Stamp and Coin Co., conservatively graded as Fine-15 where it realized a very strong \$1,300. This same specimen reappeared as lot 472 in Superior Galleries **The Dr. Donald Davenport Collection** sale, February 21 & 22, 1977 where it was acquired by Jules Reiver.

It should be mentioned that the number B32 (or H32, the Haseltine equivalent number) has been applied to specimens that catalogers did not attribute correctly as existing varieties or sub-varieties. A 1798 dollar called H32 in the Numismatic Gallery sale of the **World's Greatest Collection of United States Silver Coins**, January 20, 1945 is an example.

It is described as "Large eagle and knobless 9 . . ." The correct B32 obverse has a knob 9 in the date. A specimen, lot 110, in the **W. Earl Spies Collection Sale**, Stack's, 1974 was called B32 also. The obverse was that of B6, the reverse B17. This combination is the same as the B6 die marriage as described in Bolender.

Thus the 'Spies B32' is not and was not a new die marriage.

1798 B33 (BB-117):

Mulford B. Simons of Penn Valley Rare Coins discovered this new die marriage in January, 1973. Mulford B. Simons acquired the dollar and was unable to successfully attribute the coin as to Bolender variety. He took the coin to Wilmington, Delaware specialist Jules Reiver for attribution. Jules determined it was the obverse of Bolender 26-31 with a new reverse! [*Note the obverse die for 1798 B33 was used in the striking of seven die marriages!*] Jules numbered it B33.



Reverse Die, 1798 B33. Penn-Valley 'discovery specimen.' Note reverse die bulging in the central areas and the breaks beginning to form at the rims. Photo is of the Jules Reiver Specimen and is courtesy of Jules Reiver.

Jules Reiver and Mulford B. Simons reported the discovery in **Coin World**, April 25, 1973. The article was on page 65 and was entitled *Discover New Reverse Design on 1798 U.S. Silver Dollar*.

There is ALWAYS something new in numismatics, if not under the sun, and a 1798 silver dollar with a hitherto unreported reverse is a case in point. It was authenticated by Mulford B. Simons of Pennsylvania, backed up by Julius Reiver of Delaware, and titled B-33.

The article went on to describe the new die marriage, including “Reiver adds that the lower reverse seems strong and that the die must have broken in two, as the upper and lower halves are not in the same plane.”

Although the 1798 B33 remains rare today, specialist W. Earl Spies was able to acquire two specimens prior to his collection being sold in December, 1974. The two specimens were different die states, one late and the other very late. The later die state has the break complete and bisecting the reverse from the T in UNITED to the M in AMERICA. Very few have been reported since. The specimen called H33 in the **World's Greatest Collection**, lot 60, is not a B33 as we know it today. And the following lot, called H34 was most likely a B8.

“Not in *Haseltine Type Table Catalog of 1881*”:

There were five new varieties listed (that were not in the *1881 Haseltine Type Table*) in M. H. Bolender's **The United States Early Silver Dollars from 1794 - 1803** when first published in 1950. They were 1795 B16, B17; 1798 B31; 1800 B20; and 1802/1 B9.

The 1795 B16 was acquired by Bolender around 1932. This ‘discovery specimen’ of B16 appeared in Bolender's February 23, 1952 **183rd Auction Sale** of his reference collection of early dollars, lot 19:

1795 silver dollar. B16. New variety, not in Haseltine. Obverse from same die as B1 and B10. The reverse is new in the arrangement of the berries and leaves in the wreath, and is described in my book.

Uncirculated, with proof surface, a few trivial nicks visible under a glass. Beautifully toned, and a magnificent example, and one of the rarest of all dollars. Rarity 8, the only specimen known, and I believe it to be unique! Purchased by me at an Elder sale in New York 20 years ago. A prominent collector who was also in attendance bid against me, and it brought seven

times the starting bid, and a new record for a 1795 dollar. The competition was the sensation of the entire auction sale. It is certainly worth more than any other dollar of this date. **Plate.** (Reverse of this coin was used for plate II in book.) \$400.

The lot was sold to specialist K. P. Austin for \$440 on the \$400 estimate. It is unclear from the Bolender catalog description who discovered it. Mr. Austin later sold it to A. J. Ostheimer. It was sold by Superior in the **1975 ANA Auction Sale**. This specimen was again offered in the Superior Galleries February, 1977 **The Dr. Donald Davenport Collection** sale, lot 468. Its whereabouts is unknown to me today.

The 1795 B17 (new muling of known dies) that Bolender discovered and included in his 1950 book is not believed to exist by most specialists today. The coin Bolender called B17 appeared as lot 220 in M. H. Bolender's November 29, 1932 **Seventy Ninth Auction Sale . . . The Extensive Collection of Mr. P. C. Clark of Cleveland, Ohio**. In my opinion the coin was misattributed by Bolender and likely was a 1795 B10.



Obverse Die, 1795 B16. Plate is the Bolender-Austin-Ostheimer Specimen. Obverse same as B1 and is mated to new reverse. Not in Haseltine. Photo is courtesy of specialist K. P. Austin who acquired this specimen from M. H. Bolender in 1952. Two specimens are known to me.



Reverse Die, 1795 B16. Reverse of Bolender-Austin-Ostheimer Specimen. New reverse die, discovered by Bolender in the 1930s. Leaf points to center of I in AMERICA. This reverse was plated in the Bolender book. Photo courtesy of K. P. Austin.

It is not known when or by whom the 1798 B31 was discovered. Bolender had two specimens of this die marriage (lots 84 and 85 in his reference collection sale). Lot 84 was acquired from the Col. Green Collection. Lot 85 was acquired from St. Louis Stamp and Coin Company. Based on these two sources it is possible the 1798 B31 was discovered in the 1940s.

The 1800 B20 (new obverse die, reverse die also used on 1800 B4 and 1800 B16) in Bolender's reference collection (lot 162 in the 1952 sale) stated that this marriage was "not known to Haseltine." It also stated that it was "The only piece known to me." Thus it was likely that this die marriage was discovered by Bolender prior to 1950.

The 1802/1 B9 (new obverse die, reverse previously used on 1801 BB-4 and 1802/1 B2) was discovered by Bolender in 1950, prior to publication of his book when he purchased the Marmaduke Fox collection. Bolender 'kept' this specimen and it was sold as part of his own reference collection in 1952 where it was purchased by specialist K. P. Austin. Since the discovery many specimens of B9 have turned up and been offered for sale.

Summary:

There was one die marriage 'reported' in 1997 but really 'discovered' prior to 1950. It was not included in the 1950 Bolender book. This is the 1795 B21 (BB-28) discovered by B. G. Johnson as described earlier in this article. There was also the Eliasberg specimen of 1795 B18 (BB-17) which was 'sold' in 1997, 'discovered' in 1953. Thus the correct answer to "how many new die marriages of early silver dollars 1794 - 1803 were discovered in 1997" is ONE. And prior to 1997 the last new die marriage discovered was the 1798 B33 (BB-117) in 1973, 25 years ago!

And there are a total of EIGHT new varieties that have been discovered that were not included in the first edition of the Bolender reference. They are 1795 B21 (BB-28) [discovered in the 1930s - 40s, surfaced in 1997], 1795 B18 (BB-17) [1953], 1798 B32 (BB-91) [1957], 1796 B6 (BB-64) [est. 1956], 1795 B19 (BB-19) [est. 1958 - 1959], 1795 B20 (BB-16) [1972], 1798 B33 (BB-117) [1973] and 1795 B22 (BB-29) [1997].

This gives us a grand total of 13 new varieties of early silver dollars discovered since the *Haseltine Type Table* was first published in 1881!

How many got all the answers right? And did I?



Quarter Census

Russell J. Logan

More than a year has passed since we first asked for quarter census data. One might ask, and rightfully so, what could have taken so long? The truth of the matter is that I wanted to bring you something new in the world of Bust Quarters, and not just another list of die marriages from which many of us construe a rarity and condition matrix. The most recent and dynamic inquisition into this series concerns the true identity of Ard W. Browning, the author of **The Early Quarter Dollars of the United States 1796-1838**. A most entertaining article on this topic by Carl Herkowitz appeared in the Summer-Fall 1997 issue of **The Asylum**, the journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. Thanks, Carl, and now who is that Duphorne character?

In an effort to expand the census to include “everything in your collection” as so adroitly put by our editors, I included a separate line on the census for each of the “E” and “L” counterstamps. Not that they were different die marriages from those already registered, but, like Ard himself, they conveyed a chord of mystique and wizardry. And much to my amazement, no one seemed to have an example of the counterstamp on the 1825 B3 die marriage! A letter from Karl Moulton several months later confirmed my suspicions that there are no known counterstamps on the 1825 B3 die marriage. Please let me know if we are premature in dropping this counterstamp from our census.

The Eliasberg Sale by Bowers and Merena contained an outstanding selection of Uncirculated and Proof Bust Quarters, many of which had been off the market for nearly a century. The 23 lot run of small diameter Capped Bust Quarters *averaged* \$13,870 per coin! And the rarest die marriage was just an 1837 B5, which is only an R-5! Needless to say, it was a very exciting sale, but with little available for the average collector.

Our next census will be the Flowing Hair and Heraldic Eagle Half Dollars. If you would be kind enough to forward your census to our P. O. Box, we will include it with our next report.

QUARTER CENSUS

Jan-98

Based on 1199 coins surveyed

R#			007	006	323	002	012	014	282	003	305	048	131	124	716	283	116	RPD	AVG	MAX
1796	1	6		50					12									2	31	50
	2	3		20					12			3			4			4	12	20
1804	1	4	40	20	8	8	10	6	4	20	12	4	15		12			14	13	40
	2	6	8	18	10	8	3					3			6			7	8.3	18
1805	1	5	50	20	6	12	6		12			15			15			12	17	50
	2	3	45	30	8	10	15	10	10		30	15		8	12			14	19	45
	3	1	45	40	8	10	15	4	15		20	8			15		8	11	17	45
	4	4	60	45	4	10	35		10		10	4			20	15		13	21	60
	5	7	6	30	10	10	12	3				30			10			10	14	30
1806	1	2	40	40	6	10	10	20	12		20	3	10	20	20	8		19	16	40
	2	4	50	30	12	12	25	20	10			15	10					10	20	50
	3	1	50	40	8	15	30	8	10	30		35			12			12	25	50
	4	4	45	25	6	10	8	4	12			15			20			11	16	45
	5	6	45	20	6	10	25		12			8			25	8		14	17	45
	6	6	25	40	4		10					8						5	17	40
	7	3	15	40	8	20	20	4	10									7	17	40
	8	7	45	30	8	12	6		10			3						8	16	45
	9	1	35	40	6	8	10	3	12		15			15				10	16	40
	10	5	45	40	6	15	10	20	6			5			40			10	18	45
1807	1	3	50	30	4	10	45	4	12	40	20		10		20	25		16	25	50
	2	3	55	10	6	6	25	4	15		20				4	3		12	15	55
1815	1	1	55	45	12	30	45	30	20	45	45		15		8		15	18	31	55
	1	E								40								3	55	63
	1	L		40														4	46	58
1818	1	2	63	25	12	15	25	6	6	60	15				4	55	12	17	26	63
	2	1	60	60	12	30	45	8	10	20	40	8		20		20	12	15	26	60
	3	2	50	50	12	25	12	12	12	20	40	20				8		15	25	50
	4	2	55	40	8	25	40	30	12	25	55					45	10	17	29	55
	5	4	40	35	12	25	50	20		40	45	40				10		14	28	50

QUARTER CENSUS

Jan-98

Based on 1199 coins surveyed

R#			007	006	323	002	012	014	282	003	305	048	131	124	716	283	116	RPD	AVG	MAX
1818	6	5	50	50	12	30	20	15	15	25				30		35	12	15	26	50
	7	4	6	55	8	25	30	8	15	25						55	8	15	24	55
	8	3	45	40	20	20	53	15	20	40	40			15	8	20	15	19	31	53
	9	6	58	35	10		40	10	8	12		8	25		8	40	8	17	22	58
	10	4	50	30	12	25	30	20	20	30	35	10			20		12	18	24	50
1819	1	5	50	50	30	10	12	8		40	55		10			35	6	17	28	55
	2	3	45	45	8	20	25	6	30	15	25	10	15	12	50	50	8	20	22	50
	3	1	40	35	10	25	50	50	20	30	30	45					12	15	30	50
	4	5	12	40	8	30	35	4	8	45			15		8	55	3	17	25	55
1820	1	3	58	45	10	20	12	20	10	30	50	8				12	12	16	27	58
	2	2	55	30	20	20	15	8	12	40	40	12		15	12		12	16	24	55
	3	3	40	30	8	30	18	20	10			10	12		8		12	12	19	40
	4	2	40	45	8	35	50	20	10	15	55	8		15		50	12	15	28	55
	5	5	50	25	10	12	25	8		20								9	21	50
1821	1	2	55	40	12	35	40	6	15	20	40					8	15	13	25	55
	2	3	50	50	15	20	35	15	10	45	40					30		10	31	50
	3	2	40	40	15	30	40	20	25	25	58	15	15			35	15	17	27	58
	4	3	45	40	8	25	18	6	10	45	30		15	6	20	30	15	19	25	50
	5	5	45	50	10	30	35	15		40							12	8	30	50
	6	7	8	25										6				3	17	25
1822	1	2	55	40	25	30	55	25	12	25	25		25	15	15	20	20	24	29	55
	2	5	58	25	8		12	8	8	12			6					9	17	58
1823	1	6	55	8					8	10								4	20	55
1824	1	3	58	30	10	20	40	12	10	25	35		10			50	8	20	25	58

QUARTER CENSUS

R#			007	006	323	002	012	014	282	003	305	048	131	124	716	283	116	RPTD	AVG	MAX
1825	1	5	20	30	20	30	25	25			35			25		50	10	14	27	50
	2	2	50	50	12	20	45	35	12	25	35		15	35	35	40	10	23	28	50
	2	E																1	20	20
	2	L																1	55	55
	3	3	58	60	15	35	35	30	20	12	35		20	30			15	16	29	60
1827	1	7	60															1	60	60
	2	6	63															1	63	63
1828	1	1	53	50	40	30	40	20	10	12	40		12	15		15	12	22	27	53
	2	3	58	45	8	25	30	18	10				10			50		10	28	58
	3	3	63	55	10	30	12	15	12	20					6	15	8	13	24	63
	4	3	50	60	20	35	20	45	10	40		15	12	20	12	20	12	16	27	60
1831	1	3	55	50	35	20	35	15		15			18					9	31	55
	2	2	65	45	40	45	40	40	20	35	58			35				12	43	65
	3	5	45	50	12	35			20	15	40	8						11	28	50
	4	1	60	45	45	30	50	30	15	45	45			35				12	41	60
	5	3	55	50	35	20	50	30	12	15	40		30	40		40		14	35	55
	6	3	60	50	35	30	45	30		15	20		30					10	35	60
	7	7	20	6	3													4	9.7	20
1832	1	1	60	50	20	20	45	30	12	30	40		40	25	60			12	35	60
	2	2	55	45	12	35	40	40	30	45	35		35		35		15	14	35	55
1833	1	2	50	50	30	25	35	40		45	30			35		45		13	39	50
	2	1	63	50	20	40	30	20	15	12			20					11	31	63
1834	1	1	45	50	15	20	40	40	20	20	50	50	35	20				14	35	50
	2	4	60	58	20	35	25		25	20			15	25				10	32	60
	3	3	45	50	30	40	35	20	25	40	45	20						11	34	50
	4	1	40	55	15	25	40	20	30	12	35		25	40	45			14	32	55
	5	5	58	50	15	30	10	40		45		8						10	31	58

Jan-98

Based on 1199 coins surveyed

R#			007	006	323	002	012	014	282	003	305	048	131	124	716	283	116	RPD	AVG	MAX
1835	1	1	50	50	35	25	35	25	40	15	45	30		40				14	34	50
	2	2	55	40	15	35	35	30	10	50	40			40				10	34	5
	3	4	20	40	15	12		15	12	25			40		20			10	22	40
	4	3	55	40	30	25	20	30	15	40		15	30					11	30	5
	5	3	50	58	30	30	50	12	15	15	30		15	20				13	31	58
	6	3	40	50	35	40	45	10	15	25	50			25				13	34	50
	7	2	45	55	20	25	25	30	20	10	40			25				12	31	55
	8	4	45	50	30	30		35	30	30	45			20				10	37	50
1836	1	2	61	45	40	20	40	40	45	15		30		20				14	37	61
	2	3	62	45	30	25	45	30	15	40	58	20		30				13	38	62
	3	1	50	55	15	35	50	40		40	40		30	40		20		13	35	55
	4	5	50	45	40	45	30	10	10				35			15		11	32	50
	5	7	10	30	15						15		10					5	16	30
1837	1	4	55	50	20	30	30	40		20	40	30	20		20			12	34	55
	2	1	55	50	20	25	50	35		40	45			35	20		20	14	38	55
	3	5	40	50	8	25		20	20	40	35	20	8	20				12	27	50
	4	5	62	55	15	40	20	30	25	20	40	12	40	30				15	33	62
	5	5	40	45	12	12	15		8	60		8						10	26	65
1838	1	1	55	45	30	25	55	30	25	40	35		35	20	40		30	16	37	55

	007	006	323	002	012	014	282	003	305	048	131	124	716	283	116	95 KNOWN DIE MARRIAGES			
OWNED	93	93	89	84	83	78	75	68	57	41	39	38	36	35	33				
AVG.GRADE	47	41	16	24	30	20	15	29	37	15	20	24	19	29	12				



The 1818 O108 'Inverted Edge' Bust Half Dollar

Jeff Prem

BACKGROUND

Stewart P. Witham wrote an article about Bust Half Dollar edge lettering varieties which appeared in the **Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine** of March 1968. In the article, he suggested that, based on the construction of the Castaing machine, it would be possible "for one half of the edge lettering to read one way, the tops of the letters reaching for the obverse, and the other half of the words to read the other direction with the tops of the letters reaching for the reverse." If the edge dies were oriented in such a manner, the wording around the edge of a Bust Half would read as follows:

*FIFTY CENTS OR HALF A DOLLAR



Figure 1. Edge mirror photograph of 1818 O108 'Inverted Edge' Bust Half Dollar. (Photo courtesy of Russell J. Logan)

In the summer of 1994 Charles 'Chuck' Erb of Pennsylvania was looking at Bust Halves at a local coin show when he found a low grade 1818 Bust Half with an 'X' scratched across the bust. It was an Overton-108, also known as the 'pincer 8's' variety because of the open-top 8s in the date. Most collectors would have passed on the coin but Chuck, who always examines the 'third' side of the coin, noticed that the edge lettering on this coin was 'inverted' exactly in the way Witham had predicted in 1968. Several months later Chuck found a second specimen of the 1818 O108 'Inverted Edge' variety. In January 1996, Chuck mentioned the variety to me while reviewing my application for BHNC membership. A few weeks later I found an example at a local show. Another example appeared in

Sheridan Downey's Mail Bid Sale #18, as Lot 151, from the Gerald Schertz collection. Other examples were found at the 1996 ANA convention in Denver. Figure 1 shows a photograph of an 1818 O108 with an 'inverted edge', taken with Russ Logan's edge mirror.

DESCRIPTION

Donald Gunnet, a specialist in Bust Half edge die varieties, has examined one of the 'inverted edge' coins. He determined that it was produced from a set of edge dies unknown to him, or Dr. Ivan Leaman, when the two produced their edge die variety study which was published by the American Numismatic Society in 1986. Mr. Gunnet refers to this new set of edge dies as variety 1818-6a. Gunnet has given a detailed description of these dies which I quote as follows:

As for the edge die itself, it is a very early die state with all the letters very sharp. There are several very significant happenings in the words FIFTY CENTS. The T in FIFTY is doubled widely to the left, the lower right side of Y is slightly doubled left, the C in CENTS is also doubled left.

In addition to these diagnostics, on the specimens I examined, the R in OR is very lightly impressed compared to the other lettering around the edge.

At a recent gathering of BHNC members, I had the opportunity to examine over a dozen examples of the 1818 O108 variety. In examining these examples, I was able to identify four different obverse die states for the variety. These are given as follows:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Stage 1 | Stars 1-4, 11-13, and 1s in date very lightly drawn to edge when viewed under magnification. |
| Stage 2 | All stars lightly drawn to edge when viewed under magnification. 1s in date appear drawn to edge without magnification. |
| Stage 3 | Scroll is heavily clash marked under bust (see 3rd edition Overton plate). |
| Stage 4 | Clash marks removed. All stars and 1s in date heavily drawn to edge. Only partial dentils remain. |

The edges of the coins were then examined. The three coins I examined from die state 1 all were from the same set of edge dies, which would be Gunnet and Leaman's 1818-6 edge variety. On this edge, the upper angle of the N in CENTS was broken in a very distinctive way. Five coins showing obverse die state 2 were examined. These pieces were

the 'Inverted Edge' coins, Gunnet and Leaman's variety 1818-6a. In addition to the characteristics described in the preceding paragraph, the lettering on the edge of these coins was the sharpest, and clearest, of all of the 1818 O108s I examined. The two coins of die state 3 and the three coins of die state 4 shared a common edge die, which appears to correspond to Gunnet and Leaman's edge variety 1818-7. The distinguishing mark on this variety is a doubled F in the word HALF.

SPECULATIONS

How was this curiosity produced? The obvious answer is that a careless workman at the Mint inserted the dies into the Castaing machine upside down in relation to the another. Presumably, a few planchets were then prepared until the error was noticed and the edge dies correctly aligned in the Castaing machine. During work on this article, I spoke to Mr. Adam Hardcastle of the Gallery Mint Museum. When the Gallery Mint produced their reproduction 1793 half cent, they used a Castaing machine to letter the edge. Their edge dies consist of two rectangular bars of the same size, held in place in the machine by set screws. When they were lettering the planchets, prior to striking, one of the edge dies was placed in the Castaing machine incorrectly. Mr. Hardcastle told me that 60-70 planchets were produced with inverted edge lettering before the error was discovered.

Another possible explanation for this error is that the Mint improperly prepared a set of edge dies which were correctly placed in the Castaing machine by the operator. I will attempt to

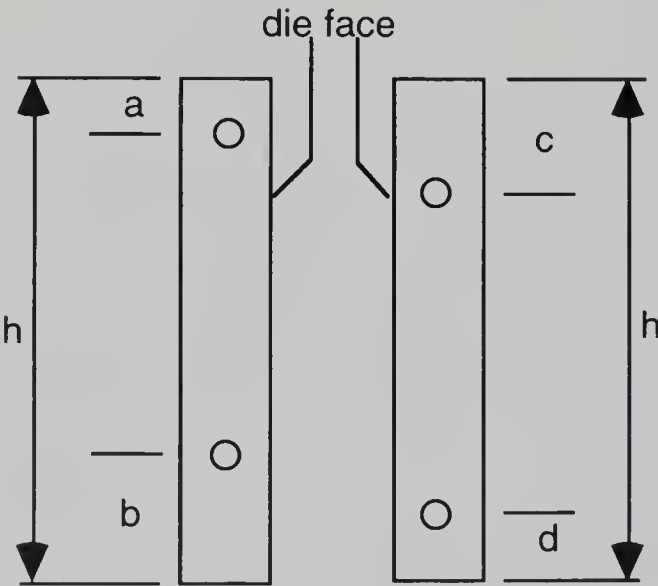


Figure 2a. Top view of a hypothetical set of edge dies.

explain how it would be relatively easy to engineer simple operator errors, such as occurred at the Gallery Mint, out of the system. With no Castaing machines or edge dies from the early Mint still extant, no one can be sure exactly how this was accomplished. However, due to the fact that this sort of error is very uncommon, I feel we can be sure some sort of system was used to prevent confusion in the die placement in the Castaing machine. Figures 2a and 2b show two different ways in which the edge dies could have been designed to allow them to fit into the Castaing machine in only one way.

Figure 2a shows a hypothetical set of edge dies as seen from above, with the die faces facing each other at the center of the diagram. The dies consist of two rectangular bars of the same size, with holes punched in them to allow pins to be inserted to hold them in place. By designing a system with each hole placed at a different distance from the end of the bar, it is impossible to place a die in the Castaing machine 'upside down'. These distances are shown in Figure 2a as a, b, c and d. Also note that with this system, it is not possible to place two edge dies with the same lettering into the Castaing machine. Therefore, edge errors such as "*FIFTY CENTS OR *FIFTY CENTS OR" or "HALF A DOLLAR HALF A DOLLAR" cannot be produced.

Figure 2b shows another hypothetical design for a set of edge dies. This time, you are looking at the die from the side, with the long axis going into the page. This design is based on the idea that the Castaing machine had grooves into which the dies were placed. The dimensions of the die tongues, which would fit into the grooves of the Castaing machine, are given in Figure 2b as w, x, y and z. With an appropriate choice of these dimensions, it also would be impossible to put the dies in 'upside down', or to put two dies with the same wording into the Castaing machine.

Given all this, how was this interesting error produced? I believe that the error occurred when the edge dies were produced. Because the production of dies was a job for skilled workmen, errors are much less likely to occur at this stage. How were edge dies produced from working hubs? Again, we don't know but Figure 3 shows a hypothetical design for an adapter to hold a working die while it was being produced from a working hub in the screw press. The adapter consists of a cylinder with a base that would fit into the press like a coinage die, but with the top machined in

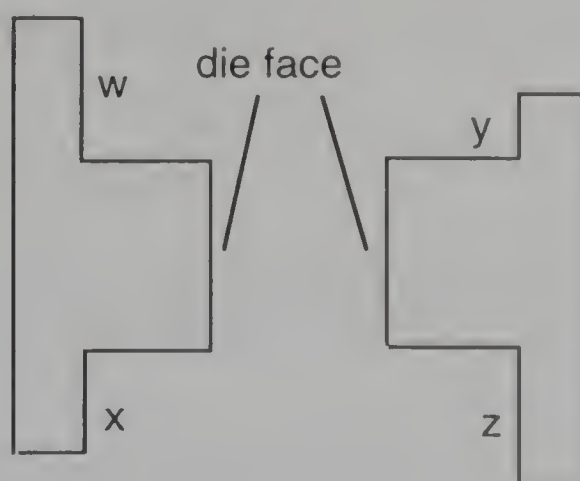


Figure 2b. Axial view of a hypothetical set of edge dies.

such a way as to accept the edge die. If dies were held in the screwpress by the use of set screws, as is known because many coins from this time exist with rotated reverses, it is possible that a craftsman in 1818 accidentally rotated the cylinder with an edge die in it 180° before tightening the set screws, producing an edge die that was ‘upside down’. This set of dies could have slipped past an inspector and made it to the Castaing machine where a few pieces were produced before the error was discovered and the edge dies condemned.

CONCLUSIONS

Much more research into this fascinating error remains to be done before we can be certain as to what happened at the Mint in 1818. A search for more half dollars with edge die 1818-6a must be made. If we can find a half dollar with edge die 1818-6a, with normal edge lettering, we will then know that the dies could be, and were, placed in the Castaing machine upside down such as happened at the Gallery Mint. Thus the second scenario I have given will be proven to be incorrect.

Based on the evidence that now exists, I believe the Mint had some sort of system to prevent confusion when placing edge dies in the Castaing machine. The error is currently known on only one set of edge dies, on one specific die marriage. Only a few examples of the error are known, all of an early edge die state, indicating that the error was quickly discovered. No halves with properly oriented lettering from this set of edge dies are known. These facts convince me that the error occurred when the edge die was made. Because no other United States coins are known with inverted edge lettering, it seems that some sort of quality control was practiced at the early Mint.

During research for this article, I came across two other examples of coins with inverted edge lettering, aside from the 1818 O108 half or the Gallery Mint 1793 half cent reproduction.

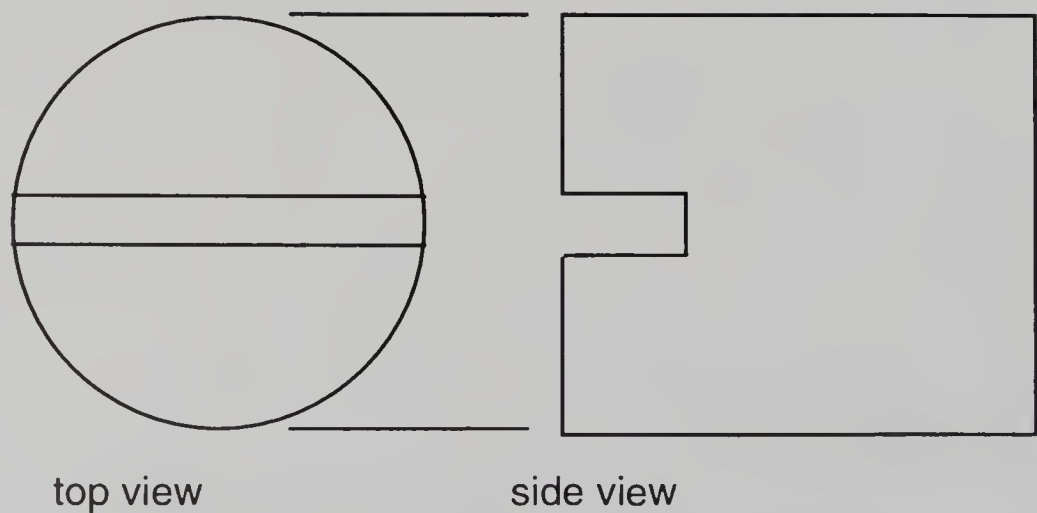


Figure 3. Hypothetical adapter for edge die production.

In his 1968 article for the **Numismatic Scrapbook**, Stewart Witham described an 1808 French 1 Franc piece from the Limoges Mint. The edge lettering reads as follows:

.+. I PROMISE TO PAY ON DEMAND ONE HALF PENNY

Chris Pilliod provided me with information on a Conder token with inverted edge lettering. It is a 1795 half penny token, Dalton and Hammer #6, County of Dorsetshire, City of Poole. The edge lettering reads as follows:

DIEU PROTEGE * LA FRANCE

I propose that we study the edges of our early halves and dollars, as well as lettered edge half cents and cents, to see if we can find other similar errors. Such a study would help increase our knowledge of how edge dies were produced at the early Mint.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This article is the end result of the efforts of many knowledgeable people. I wish to thank the following people who contributed information and ideas which made this article better than anything I could have produced on my own:

Charles N. Erb

Russell J. Logan

Donald Gunnet

Adam Hardcastle

Christopher Pilliod

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ivan Leaman and Donald Gunnet, *Early Half Dollar Edges and Die Sequences*, **America's Silver Coinage 1794-1891**, Coinage of the Americas Conference, American Numismatic Society, New York, 1986, pp. 41-92.

Stewart P. Witham, *1807-1836 Bust Half Edges Up-Dated*, **The Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine**, Chicago, March 1968, pp. 492-494.



Oh, Those Errant A's

Stu Keen

*Aligning those A 's on the Bust Half Reverse can be frustrating -
Unless you use this simpler method!*

Al Overton gave us the **Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794 - 1836** in 1967 to serve as the bible for all his followers. He presented technical and graphic aid for identifying hundreds of varieties of Bust Half Dollars. This first edition was greatly enhanced with the Second Edition in 1970, and even further with the Third Edition in 1990. All collectors and dealers use this book almost exclusively as a reference.

What Overton gave us was his findings of years of research and study of the Robert Scott / John Reich designed half dollars ranging from 1794 to 1836. In the Capped Bust series, there are 450 varieties currently identified, ranging from 1807 to 1836, a span of 29 years. In 1827, there are 49 varieties alone.

So, how do you tell what variety you have in hand? Some are easy to the dedicated collector, but Overton meticulously set about listing various characteristics of each known variety to help "pin it down".

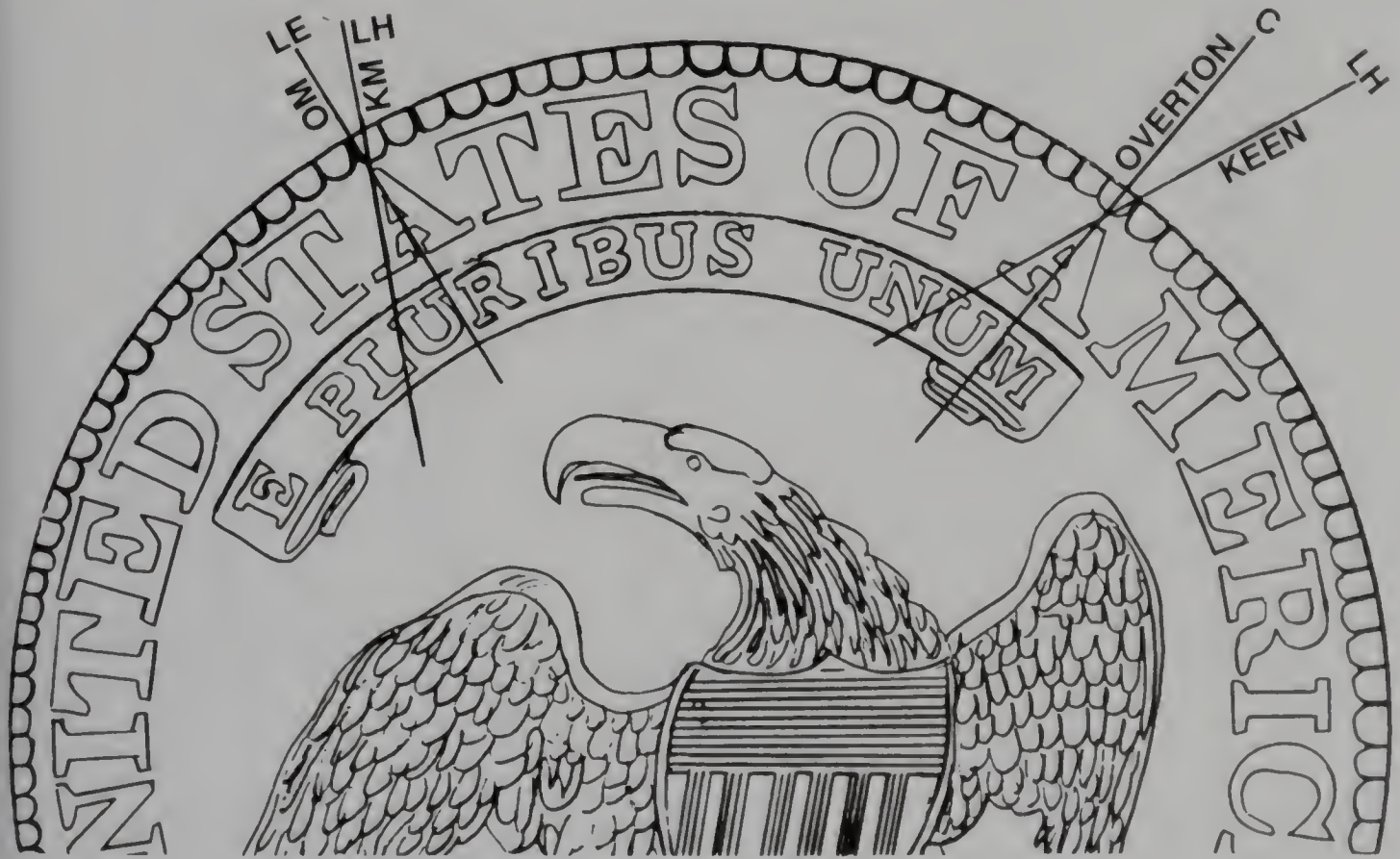
This is where my commentary begins on the identity of the reverse of the Capped Bust Half. I do not know how you go about typing the reverse of your half dollars. Everyone seems to have either a "quick fix" method or some ritual that will give a seemingly satisfactory confirmation of the reverse type. I like to work the A's, and the major diagnostic given by Overton is locating the three A's (in STATES OF AMERICA) in their relationship to the dentils around the rim. He will use B (between), LE (lower edge), LH (lower half), C (center), UE (upper edge) and UH (upper half) as the position of the A as it points to the dentil.

Now, here is where the frustration sets in. Overton in his first edition of 1967 was silent on how to line up the A's with the opposing dentil. He merely said "... A2LE means center of top of second A is below the lower edge of a segment. "Well, this is too vague. In the revised edition of 1970, he gives a little more explanation by saying, "... the line is centered between the inner serifs at base and through center of apex." Somebody must have complained that these descriptions were also wanting because Don Parsley, in editing the

Third Edition, was still more explicit by stating, “. . . that a line drawn through the center of the top (of A) and center of the bottom . . . “ will line up with the designated position of the segment shown in the text (see Figure 1).

So this now was the method to line up the A's! Have you had continued and regular success in using this method? I have not, and I use the A identity as the primary check for reverse typing. They simply do not always line up as related in the book.

Here is where I challenge the descriptions (used in all three editions) of how to line up the A, because of the numerous deviations I have found. By using the “Keen Method (KM)”, you will have greater accuracy in locating the alignment. Instead of going up the middle of the A as the book describes, go up the outside left arm of the A until it reaches the dentil.



Use the Keen Method (KM) by drawing an imaginary line up the outside left arm of the A until it reaches the dentils. This is easier than the Overton Method (OM) drawing a line through the middle of the A.

The difference in our two methods is minuscule, I admit, but it will more closely jibe with the book description.

Over the years, I have typed thousands of Bust Halves and, when I think of it, I write down the differences noted between the Overton method and the Keen method. Here are just a few of the examples I have found. There are many more as I am sure you may have encountered.

Grab some of your coins, of the date and variety below, and see what I mean:

Date	Variety	A	Book Says	Overton Method	Keen Method
1812	O110	3	C	UE	C
1817	O108	3	C	UH	C
1820/19	O102	2	C	UH	C
1824	O116	1	LE	B	LE
1826	O101	3	UE	B	UE
1826	O117	3	B	LH	LE
1827	O111	3	UH	UE	UH
1829	O112	3	UE	B	UE
1829	O115	2	UE	LE	UE
1832	O103	2	C	UH	C
1834	O105	A1	B	UE	B
1834	O105	2	B	LH	B
1834	O105	3	B	LE	B
1835	O107	2	C	UH	C

Here are some that don't match exactly but come closer with my method:

Date	Variety	A	Book Says	Overton Method	Keen Method
1809	O104	A2	C	UH	C
1812/1	O101	A3	C	UH	C
1818/7	O101	A2	C	UE	UH
1818	O107	A2	C	UE	UH
1822/1	O102	A2	B	LE	B
1823	O106	A1	C	LH	C
1824	O101	A1	UE	C	UH
1824	O103	A3	B	LE	B
1825	O113	A2	C	UH	C
1827	O129	A1	C	LH	C
1831	O108	A3	C	UE	UH
1832	O101	A1	C	LH	C
		A2	LH	UH	C
1832	O103	A2	C	UE	UH
1832	O108	A1	UH	C	UH
1832	O109	A2	C	UE	UH
1835	O105	A1	C	LE	LH
		A2	C	UH	C
		A3	LH	C	LH

The misalignment of the reverse A's is far more prevalent than the star points on the obverse. There is no quarrel with the Overton method described for those locations. They generally always work.

As mentioned earlier, everyone has their own method of typing an unknown half reverse. Some look for alignment of the I under the T, the space between 50 and C, or the A - A measurement. But because Overton gave the A's as the primary identification, I feel it should be used regularly.

If you will employ the Keen Method (KM), you will find that confirming the A's placement is quicker and more accurate, and you will start using it all the time.



A Half Dollar Promise

Edgar E. Souders

My wife, Vivian, has been taking my stepson Jeff to a local Coin Club meeting in Monroe, Michigan. Monroe, as many will recall, is the hometown of Doctor George F. Heath who, in 1888, conceived and published **The Numismatist** and co-founded the ANA.

Unfortunately, while having been a member of the Monroe Coin Club for a number of years, I have never had the opportunity to attend a meeting as they always meet on the first Tuesday of the month which is a day that I work late into the evening. Still, though unable to attend, I have tried to help support the club through their raffles and this past year I sent a copy of one of my books (**Bust Half Fever**) for the Club Library.

While in Cleveland, Ohio attending a coin Convention, my wife introduced me to a gentleman (88 years old) and his daughter, who were members of the Monroe Coin Club and who had traveled to the show. He commented that he really enjoyed reading my book on the old half dollars, and then added that he also had collected some Capped Bust Halves - and - would I like to see them? "I would love to", I stated. Moments later we were sitting at an empty table with a fresh cup of coffee and a small red box. In the box were about 25 Capped Bust Halves with some of the most original choice surfaces that I have seen in years. Some were carefully wrapped in aluminum foil while others were wrapped in tissue paper. All were then placed in small paper 2 X 2 envelopes. The first one that I picked up had writing on the envelope; 1827 About UNC., BB - 1/19/42 90 cents!!!!!!!!!!

Although there were no great rarities in the group, for the next hour I had a wonderful time carefully unwrapping each piece while marveling and commenting on the quality. Beautiful! Unbelievable! Impressive! These were just some of the words that kept coming out of my mouth. It was at that moment that his daughter stated that her dad was seriously considering liquidating his half dollars, as he was getting up there in age and did not want his family to have any problems later on. The time to sell had come. The 'bombshell' was that they had just talked with an individual from an Auction House and one of their 'professional numismatists' simply played the coins down saying; "Some of these need to be really cleaned up!" I had heard enough.

I told them not to return to that firm and took them to specialist/dealer Sheridan Downey's table whom I knew they could trust.

Interestingly, it seems that this gentleman's half dollar collecting interest had come in the late 1930's during a time when he was an employee of a bank in Monroe. On that day, a window teller brought to his attention that a local organization had recently brought in a bunch of VERY old half dollars that they had exchanged FOR FACE VALUE!

And that is how he got his first group of Capped Bust Halves. Imagine!

Later, in the early 1940's he purchased some more halves from then dealer Barney Bluestone (i.e. "BB" on the envelopes).

Although apparently never a variety collector (by Overton) he surely loved the old halves as he made the comment - something to the effect that he was - "concerned about whoever got them - that they might somehow accidentally drop them." And it really seemed to worry him. Then to make this story even more interesting, he casually mentioned that some 80+ years ago his kindergarten teacher was none other than Dr. Heath's sister! What a story!

Viv and I left him and his daughter in the very capable hands of specialist/dealer Sheridan Downey. Ten minutes or so later, we were standing in the hall, outside the bourse when his daughter came walking up to me.

"My father wanted me to find you and ask you, before we sold the coins to Mr. Downey, if you would like any of them?" What a wonderful gesture, I thought. I thanked them for asking me first, but passed on their offer and told her that Sheridan would take good care of them. With that reassurance she returned back to the bourse floor.

The next day Sheridan thanked us for sending him over and said that he had purchased the halves after grading and attributing them. It is my understanding (from a third party) that they were both very much pleased with the prices they received for the coins. Then Sheridan slid the red box over to me and asked if I wanted any of them. I picked out three CHOICE higher grade pieces, with original toned surfaces. "You can have this one for my cost," he said.

Fair enough.

So now you've heard the story. I did not see this gentleman or his daughter again at the ANA Show. But, I want you to know that I intend to make a special trip with Viv and my stepson to a Monroe Coin Club meeting. I want to talk with this keen eyed, quality conscience, gentleman once again. Maybe even someday using this story in a future book.

I also want him to know that I DID purchase three pieces from his collection. Three pieces that now have a very special spot in my personal collection. They are complete with paper envelopes that, for example, say; 1832 Half Dollar, Choice EF - 60 cents!

I think he would like to know that. And I want to tell him that I promise I will not drop them.



(PPP continued from page 5)



JRCS –

I have enclosed photographs of a very late die state of 1829 O107, featuring a deep die break running from the border at Star 12, around the underside of the star, and then across Liberty's hair to her jaw. This is not described in the third edition of Overton, and if it's been published elsewhere, I am not aware of it.

The coin was submitted to NGC for grading and variety attribution, and I thought that it's unlisted die state would be of interest to readers of **John Reich Journal**. The enclosed photos were taken by Dawn Hencinsky of our staff.

David W. Lange
Director of Research
Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America



Dr. Ivan Leaman

26-Jun-1927 to 17-Jan-1998

Dr. Ivan Leaman, noted Capped Bust Half Dollar researcher, passed away on January 17, 1998. Ivan was a valued member of not only JRCS, but also of the Bust Half Nut Club and the ANA. He began his collecting career in the mid 1960's, and soon thereafter began specializing in the Capped Bust series. His interest in the coins prompted additional research into the everyday workings of the early U.S. Mint. This interest inspired many discussions between the members of the Bust Half Nut Club. Ivan followed these discussions with the publication of a series of monographs in the Bust Half Nut Club newsletter concerning the early mint and the production of the Bust Halves. These series of monographs, first published in the early 1970's, are still, for the most part, widely accepted as the most thorough investigation into the production of Bust Halves.

During Ivan's research into the Capped Bust series, he often had discussions with Paul Munson who was deeply into the study of the Draped Bust Halves. Paul suggested to Ivan and Don Gunnet that he believed they could prove the emission sequence for the entire Capped Bust Half series based on study of the edges. Ivan and Don began an exhaustive study of the edges of the Capped Bust series to identify the individual dies used to mark the edges of the planchets before striking. They literally viewed thousands of coins making notes and identifying the differences in the edge dies and eventually the edge die states. This resulted in a probable emission sequence for the 1807-1836 lettered edge series. Their research was presented at the American Numismatic Society in New York as part of the Coinage of the Americas Conference in November 1986. The research can be referenced in the book **America's Silver Coinage 1794-1891** printed by the ANS, which was published in 1987.

Ivan was always helpful when queried about his favorite series. Many researchers never failed to consult him before making their latest projects available for public review. Knowing that their theories 'passed mustard' with Ivan, was confidence enough to finalize the project.

During Ivan's collecting career, he assembled one of the most complete collections of his beloved Bust Halves. Ivan's collection was sold by Sheridan Downey through various mail bid sales and private treaties. Ivan continued his involvement with the hobby after liquidating his collection. He attended as many coin shows as his health allowed and corresponded with collectors and researchers.

Ivan was a dentist by trade graduating from Ursinus University in Collegeville, Pennsylvania and then attending Temple Dental School in Philadelphia. He remained in Pennsylvania to practice dentistry until retiring to Florida. He served in both World War II and the Korean War. He also enjoyed both vegetable and flower gardening to pass the time between half dollar purchases. He is survived by his wife Matilda "Tillie" Leaman.

We, here at JRCS, will miss Ivan's wit and tutelage. There were many a time that a phone call to Ivan would help put things into the correct perspective. His opinions were always appreciated and forthcoming. Our organization and hobby are a better place thanks to people like Ivan.

Treasurer's Report - 01-Oct-1995 to 30-Sep-1997

This Treasure's report is analogous to the distribution of Journals during the past two years. Since our last report, which concluded on October 1, 1995, we have issued four Journals and solicited one year's dues from our membership. At the Board of Directors meeting in New York City during the ANA convention, it was decided to reset the Treasury and the volume index number with the fiscal year. Consequently, this **JR Journal** and the next one, along with the previous Volume 11, Issue 1, will be part of the 1997-8 fiscal year, which will end September 30, 1998. The recent dues that most of you so promptly paid (thank you) is also for this fiscal year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Russell J. Logan
Treasurer

John Reich Collectors Society
P.O. Box 980205
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements for
24 Month Period Ending 30-Sep-97

Cash Position On 01-Oct-95

Checking Account	\$5,620.18	
Life Membership Account	6,125.00	
On Hand	0.00	
	Total	\$11,745.18

Income

Back Issues and Donations	\$1,872.25	
Interest	464.19	
Dues	8,250.00	
Life Membership	750.00	
	Total Income	\$11,336.44

Expenses

Supplies	\$519.00	
Journal	5,676.10	
Postage	4,131.98	
Miscellaneous	467.08	
	Total Expenses	\$10,794.16

Cash Position On 30-Sep-97

Checking Account	\$5,412.46	
Life Membership Account	6,875.00	
On Hand	0.00	
	Balance	\$12,287.46

